JIHAD IN ISLAM

By

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English rendering

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In the name of Allah,
the Merciful and the Most Beneficent

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The word *Jihad* is commonly translated into English as 'the Holy War' and for a long while now the word has been interpreted so that it has become synonymous with a 'mania of religion'. The word *Jihad* conjures up the vision of a marching band of religious fanatics with savage beards and fiery eyes brandishing drawn swords and attacking the infidels wherever they meet them and pressing them to recite *Kalimah* under the edge of the sword. The artists have drawn this picture in a masterly style and have inscribed under it in bold letters :

'A nation whose history is nothing but a tale of bloodshed'.

The irony is that the artists are no other but those of our self-styled benefactors who themselves have been engaged in an extremely unholy war for centuries. They themselves look robbers and dacoits on the world stage, armed to the teeth with all kinds of deadly weapons, pillaging the countries and enslaving nations to capture new markets of trade, seize resources of raw material, open lands for colonisation and mines yielding valuable metals to provide fuel for their everburning fire of avarice. They fight not for the cause of Allah but for the satisfaction of their lust and hunger. For them, it is quite fair an excuse for invading a nation that its territory contains mines, or its lands yield bumper crops, or oil has been struck there, or they can prove

prospective market for their products, or their surplus population can be settled on the lands belonging to these weak people. If any country is unfortunately situated on the way to a country already occupied by these colonialists, or is in their plan to be occupied, it is quite enough an excuse for them to capture it. Whatever we Muslims did is now a part of history, past and gone, but their deeds are the current happenings witnessed all over the world day and night. Asia, Africa, Europe and America in short no portion of this planet has been spared from bloodshed by these colonialists! It is no doubt their superb art that they have painted our picture so gory and dark that it has virtually overshadowed and concealed their own ugly picture. And how amazing is our simplicity that we were so much terrified by the picture of ours painted by these cunning aliens that we never thought of looking at the artists behind the canvas. Instead we started apologizing and explaining that we have nothing to do with war and bloodshed! We are pacifist preachers just like the mendicants and missionaries preaching some religious beliefs and refuting certain other beliefs, and to convince the people in our favour is what we do in nutshell. We are militant by no means. No doubt we did defend ourselves in the face of aggression but now we have renounced that defensive war too. We have now officially denounced armed struggle of all sorts just to convince and satisfy our overlords. Now the term *Jihad* only refers to word-war through spoken or written word. It is now exclusively your domain to fight with arms

and ammunition while we are contented with our pen and our tongue.

Causes of Misunderstanding about Jihad

Anyhow this is a part of political tactics. But from a purely scholastic standpoint when we analyse the causes why the real nature of the Jihad in the way of Allah has become so difficult to understand not only for non-Muslims, but for the Muslims too, we discover two major and basic misconceptions. The first misunderstanding is that Islam is taken as a religion in the conventional sense of the term 'religion'. The second misconception is that Muslims are taken as a nation in the technical sense of this term. These two misunderstandings have not only mixed up the concept of *Jihad* but have entirely changed the picture of Islam as a whole and have completely misrepresented the position of the Muslims.

Religion as a common term means nothing more than a hotch potch of some beliefs, prayers and rituals. If this is what 'religion' means, then, it should indeed be a private affair. You should be free to entertain any belief and worship any diety whom your conscience is inclined to accept. If you are over-zealous and ardent devotee of such a religion, you may go and preach it to the whole world and engage yourselves in declamations with the protagonists of other religions. There is no occasion and justification to take up arms in this process. Can you convert people to your faith by using sheer force.

This apprehension is quite natural if you regard Islam as a religion in the conventional meaning of the term, and if Islam is taken as a conventional type of religion, the institution of *Jihad* cannot be justified.

Similarly the term 'Nation' connotes nothing more than a homogeneous group of people who have associated themselves as a distinct entity on the basis of some fundamental matters being common between them. A people, who are a nation in this sense, take up arms only in two cases. Either they are attacked with the intention of usurping their lawful rights or they attack others to usurp their legitimate rights. There may be some moral justification for taking up arms in the first case (although there are some so-called humanists who condemn fighting even in self-defence as a sin). But attacking others just to snatch away their lawful rights cannot be justified by anybody except a few dictators; even the statesmen of big powers like England and France can not dare to justify such naked aggression.

What Jihad really is

If Islam is a religion and the Muslims are a nation in its conventional sense, Jihad loses all its meanings and importance because of which it has been declared as the best form of submission to the Will of Allah. In fact Islam is neither a religion, nor the Muslims are a nation in the conventional sense of these terms. Islam, instead, is a revolutionary concept and ideology which seeks to change and

revolutionise the world social order and reshape it according to its own concept and ideals. In the same way Muslims are in fact an international revolutionary party organised under the ideology of Islam to implement its revolutionary programme. Jihad is the term, denoting the revolutionary struggle to the utmost, of the Islamic revolutionary party to bring about Islamic revolution.

Islam like other revolutionary ideologies, has its own terminology to make its revolutionary concept clear and distinct against all other concepts and ideals. Jihad is also one of its distinct terms. Islam intentionally shunned all the relevant terms denoting war in Arabic like *harb* etc. and used the term Jihad synonymous with struggle and strive, rather more forceful and comprehensive than the word struggle. The term Jihad can be explained as exerting one's utmost endeavour in promoting a cause.

One may ask what is the need of a new term in the face of so many synonymous words. Its answer is nothing but that the term 'war' has always been used for the fights between various nations and countries for their own selfish ends and material considerations. The motives behind all these battles had always been personal or collective interests devoid of any support for principles or ideology. The concept of war in Islam is quite different and the current term of war does not convey its concept hence Islam shuns the term 'war'. Islam does not believe in the interest of any particular nation or

country and has no concern with the hegemony of this or that country or nation on earth. Islam is interested in the welfare of mankind as a whole and has its own concept of this welfare and methodology to implement it. Any government and authority opposed to its ideology and concept, wherever and whoever it may be, Islam is out to eliminate it. Islam stands for the domination of its own ideology and concept without caring the least who supports its cause and whose authority vanquishes in this process. Islam demands not any piece of land but authority all over the globe. Islam strives not for the suzerainty of a particular nation or country but for the introduction of its programme and system for welfare of the mankind as a whole. Islam wishes to exploit all the available forces helpful in bringing about a revolution and uses the term Jihad for this auspicious struggle.

To change the views and mind of the people through spoken word as well as through written word is also a form of *Jihad*, and to bring down the old tyrannical social system and establish a new order based on justice and fairplay by dint of power too is 'Jihad', while physical exertion and spending money for this cause is also a part of *Jihad*.

'For the Cause of Allah' the Essential Condition

'*Jihad*' in Islam is not merely a 'struggle', it is instead a 'struggle for the 'Cause of Allah'. The Cause of Allah is essential for the term of '*Jihad*' in Islam. This expression is also a part of the exclusive

terminology of Islam which I have mentioned above. *Fi Sabilillah* literally means 'in the way of Allah'. It is this translation which misled the people into believing that Jihad in the way of Allah means forcible conversion of people to the faith of Islam, for the people with rigid thinking could interpret expression 'in the way of Allah' in no other and wider sense. But in the terminology of Islam this expression carries much wider sense. All that is done for the collective well-being of mankind without any material consideration and solely to win the favour of Allah, is regarded in Islam as something done 'in the way of Allah'. For example, if you give away something in charity for any moral or material consideration in this world, it would not be regarded as an 'act in the way of Allah'. Instead if your intention is to win the pleasure of Allah by helping someone poor, it would be deemed to be an act 'in the way of Allah'. Hence the term in the way of Allah' exclusively applies only to such deeds as are undertaken with perfect sincerity, without any consideration of material and worldly gain for ones ownself but sincerely for the benefit of others. In fact the sole purpose of human life is nothing but to earn the pleasure of the one and the only authority of this whole universe.

The condition 'in the way of Allah, with 'Jihad' is solely for this reason. It strictly implies that when ever any individual or a group comes forward to bring about a revolution in the prevailing system of life and to establish a new system based on the ideology of Islam, all the struggle and sacrifices

should be clear of all selfish motives. There must not be the slightest intention or desire to invest authority in ones own self after snatching it from others. Such a noble struggle should be completely free from the taint of all selfish motives like gaining wealth and splendour, name and fame, or any personal glory or elevation. All sacrifices and exertions should be directed to achieve the one and the only end *i.e.,* the establishment of a just and equitable social order for the humanity as a whole. The only reward to be sought in this struggle should be to gain the favour of Allah. The Holy Qur'an says:

> *'Those who believe fight in the way of Allah and the unbelievers fight in the way of Taghut (4 : 76).*

The word *Taghut* is derived from *Tughyan* (the deluge) which bears the meaning 'to cross the limit'. When the river overflows its banks we say 'the river has flooded'. Similarly, when man transgresses all lawful bounds and asserts himself as overlord over human beings or expropriates over and above his legitimate right, it is 'to strive in the way of *Taghut*'. As against it 'fighting in the way of Allah' is to struggle for the establishment of just and equitable order of Allah Almighty in the world. Those who struggle for this sacred cause should themselve abide by the divine law and should make others to follow it. The Holy Qur'an elaborates this point:

> *'That abode of the Hereafter We shall reserve for those who do not seek glory in the earth nor wish to make mischief, and the ultimate good is*

only for those who are God-fearing.' (28 : 83)

It is reported in the Traditions that some body enquired from the Holy Prophet (peace be upon him), "What does 'fighting in the cause of Allah' imply? One fights to gain some material benefit. Another fights to earn reputation for valour. Yet another person fights to wreak vengeance upon the other or to uphold his national honour. Who among all of them really fights 'in the way of Allah?' The Holy Prophet (peace be upon him) answered:

> *"None of them. Only the one who fights for no other purpose but the glorification of the word of Allah."*

Another tradition relates :

> *"If one fights even with the slightest desire to get just a rope to tie his camel with, forfeits his reward.*

Allah accepts only such deeds as are solely aimed at winning the pleasure of Allah with no other purpose, be it personal or collective. Hence the condition 'in the way of Allah' is of utmost importance for 'Jihad' from the Islamic viewpoint. All the living creatures in the world do strive and struggle for their existence, exerting their utmost efforts to achieve their aim. It is the most important, rather fundamental ideal of the Muslims, the most outstanding revolutionary party to sacrifice its life and soul and all the resources at its command to fight against the evil forces of the world, not to take their place but to completely eliminate the evil and to enforce the word of Allah

all over the world. After having briefly elucidated the meaning of Jihad and the significance of the term 'in the way of Allah'. I would like to explain in brief the call for revolution, which Islam gives to communicate the real purpose of Jihad and its main objective?

The Revolutionary Call Of Islam

The revolutionary call of Islam, in a nutshell, is :

'O People! Submit totally to Allah alone Who has created you.' (2 : 21)

The call of Islam is not addressed to the workers, landholders, peasants or industrialists, it is directed to the whole of mankind. Islam addresses man in his capacity as a human being and asks him to shun submission to all and sundry except Allah and never to think of demanding submission from fellow human beings. None except Allah Almighty could claim submission to Him. All should affirm devotion and submission to Allah the only sovereign and stand on an equal level of submission.

"Come (and join us) on a common ground between us that we shall worship none but Allah, and that we shall not associate any partner with Him, and shall not concede to any other the supreme authority beside Allah. (3 : 64)

This was a call for a total and universal revolution. It unequivocally declared that 'Sovereignty belongs to none but Allah Almighty.' No one has the right to become self-appointed ruler and order and prohibit whatever he likes on his own volition and authority. In fact the root cause of all

corruptions and evils is the pretension of authority of a human being to order and to prohibit as it is tantamount to admitting him as a partner in the absolute authority of Allah. Allah has created man in his true nature and has shown him the right way of life. The human beings deviate from this straight path only when they forget Allah the supreme Authority and thus forget their own origin. This state of affairs inevitably encourages some ambitious individuals or families or classes to claim supreme authority openly or impliedly for themselves taking undue advantage of their might and subduing the people to subjugation. On the other hand, this forgetfulness of Allah and of self leads a portion of mankind to surrender before physical might and power conceding them the right to issue commands and offering them unconditional obedience and compliance. This is the root-cause of the tyranny, confrontation and unlawful exploitation all over the world and thus the foremost target for Islam to hit and liquidate this fake authority and inhuman exploitation. Islam openly declares :

"And obey not the dictates of the transgressors who spread mischief on the earth and reform nothing (26 : 151, 152)

"And obey not one whose heart We have made heedless of Our remembrance, who follows his own lust, and goes to extremes in the conduct of his affairs.' (18 : 28)

"Certainly Allah's Curse rests on the wrong-doers who obstruct (mankind) from the way of Allah and seek to make it crooked.' (11 : 18, 19)

Islam puts it to the people :

"Are many lords differing among themselves better or Allah,

the One, the Almighty." (12 : 39)

If you do not offer devotion to Allah the only one authority, you shall never be free from the bondage of these innumerable small and fake gods. They shall impose their authority over you one way or the other and will create disruption :

"Verily, when the monarchs enter a land, they ruin it and debase its honourable people." (27 : 34)

"And when he gets power he directs all his efforts towards spreading mischief on the earth destroying harvests and killing the human race whereas Allah does not like mischief" (2 : 205)

This is not the occasion to go into the details. I wish to explain to you concisely that the call of Islam to believe in Allah, the one and the only authority, is not merely a call to accept a religious creed in the same conventional sense as is commonly the call of other religious creeds. It was a call for a real social revolution. Its main target were those privileged classes who had subjugated the common man under the garb of religion as monks and priests, under the cover of politics as monarchs and chiefs, and under the economic cover as capitalists, feudal lords and industrialists reducing the people to mere slaves. Some had openly declared themselves to be the supreme authority besides Allah and demanded submission and devotion from the people as their hereditary right or their right as a class and brazenly declared:

"Who besides me is your supreme authority." (28 : 38),
"I am your highest Lord;" (79 : 24), and
"I give life and cause death;" (2 : 258) and

"Who is stronger than us in might." (41 : 15)

Some had created false gods in the form of idols and temples to exploit the ignorance of the common man and use these idols and temples as a cover to acquiesce their own divine rights and authority.

Hence the call of Islam against heresy, polytheism and idolatry, and invitation to submit to the sole authority of Allah came into direct conflict with the interests of the Government and of the classes supporting its authority or depending on its support. That is why the people in power at once stood up against every prophet whenever he called:

'O people, obey Allah ; none is your supreme authority except Allah;' (11 : 84)

The people in power always hastened to bar his way with all their might and main alongwith all the privileged classes and the exploiters. They opposed the prophets tooth and nail, for the call of the Prophets was never a metaphysical proposition but a charter of a complete social revolution. The rulers and the exploiters smelt a political upheaval in the very first pronouncement of the prophets (peace be upon them).

The Characteristics of the Revolutionary Creed of Islam

All the Prophets of Allah (peace be on them) without exception were no doubt revolutionary leaders, and the illustrious Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was the greatest revolutionist. But there is a very clear distinction between the

revolutionary leaders in the cause of Allah and the materialist revolutionaries. The materialist revolutionaries, however sincere they may be, can never attain the true balanced approach of justice and dignity. The revolutionaries either come out of the oppressed classes or stand to uphold the rights of the oppressed. Their approach in all matters is therefore governed exclusively by the viewpoint of these classes. Their viewpoint naturally is never impartial and humane but revengeful and contemptuous against a particular class and unqualified favour of the other class. They counter tyranny with a much more revengeful reaction. It is not possible for them to shake off the feelings of vendetta, jealousy and ill-will and come out with an equitable and balanced social order ensuring the well being of all without any distinction.

In striking contrast to this, whatever be the severity of persecution against the Prophets (peace be on them) and whatever might have been the agonies suffered by them and their companions at the hands of the oppressors, the Prophets (peace be on them) never allowed their personal feelings to influence their revolutionary movement. They always acted under the direct guidance of Allah Almighty. Since Allah is over and above human passions and He has no leanings towards any particular human group or class, nor does He entertain any grudge or animosity against any class of human beings, the Prophets (peace be on them) always viewed all the matters without any bias and with an impartial justice in the interest and well-

being of humanity as a whole under the guidance of Allah. They strove to devise a system in which each and every individual might flourish within his rightful limits and enjoy his lawful rights with a perfect balance in the relationship between man and man, and between individual and the society. This is the secret of the revolutionary movements of the Prophets (peace be on them) never assuming the role of class war. They did no social reconstruction to make a particular class dominate other classes. They established a just and balanced pattern of society affording equal opportunities to all human beings for material progress and spiritual excellence.

Why Jihad?

It is not possible to discuss in detail the social order envisaged by Islam in a brief article. I hope to get an opportunty soon to discuss it in detail. What I wanted here to make clear, remaining within the limits of my subject, was the point that Islam is not merely a religious creed or a set of rituals but it is a comprehensive system that tends to annihilate all tyrannical and evil systems in the world and to enforce its own reformation programme which it deems best in the interest of mankind. Islam calls not any particular nation or group of people but the mankind as a whole to bring about revolution and reform . Islam even calls upon all the classes who oppress and exploit the people ; its call is addressed even to the monarchs and the elite to confine themselves within the lawful limits enjoined upon

them by their Lord. Islam assures them that they will gain peace and salvation, if they accept this just and balanced system. This system harbours no animosity against any human being. Its animosity is directed exclusively against tyranny, strife, immorality and transgression of one's natural limits in order to expropriate what is not apportioned to him by the law of Nature. Those who affirm faith in this ideology become members of the party of Islam with equal status and equal rights without any distinction of class, race, nation or country.

Thus comes into being an International Revolutionary Party which is called *Hizb Allah* by the holy Quran and which is also known as Islamic Party or the Muslim Ummah. This party launches its struggle to achieve the purpose of its existence from the very first day. It is but natural that this party starts an all out campaign (Jihad in Islamic terminology) to eliminate the hegemony of un-Islamic systems replacing them with a balanced social and cultural order called the Word of Allah by the holy Quran. If this party does not strive to bring about a change in the system and establish the Islamic system of government, it fails in its very purpose of existence. This party has no other aim before it but to strive and struggle for the establishment of the rule of Allah. The Holy Qur'an describes the only aim and purpose of raising this party as follows:

> *"You are the best community, raised for the guidance of mankind: You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah." (3 : 110)*

It is not a party of religious preachers or missionaries, but a team of the functionaries of Allah, *(so that you may be witnesses in regard to mankind)**, and it is their duty to wipe out oppression and mischief, strife and high handedness, and unlawful exploitation and immorality from the world by force. They are out to shatter the myth of the power and authority of all besides Allah and establish good in place of evil. The Holy Quran enjoins:

(1) *"Fight with them until there is no turbulance and persecution and submission to Allah becomes supreme." (2 : 193)*

(2) *"Unless you also help one another there will be mischief and great disorder on the earth." (8 : 73)*

(3) *"He is Allah Who has sent His Messenger with guidance and the right way, so that He may make it prevail over all other ways, even though the polytheists be much averse to it." (9 : 33)*

Hence there is no other way left for this party but to capture power, for, an evil system takes roots and flourishes under the patronage of an evil government and a righteous culture can never be established without wresting power and authority from the wicked and the corrupt and vesting it into the reformers. This party cannot even exist in its true form and according to its own way of life under an alien rule, what to speak of bringing about any change in the world. In fact no party believing in a

* **Quran** 2:143.

particular system can survive under the rule of a conflicting ideology. A. communist cannot live according to the communist ideology in England or America, for the capitalistic system will prevail by dint of power and the communist would not escape retribution of the law of the land. Similarly a Muslim cannot order his life according to the teachings of Islam under the authority of a non-Islamic system of government. All the laws and regulations that a Muslim considers wrong, the taxes that he deems unlawful, all matters he believes to be illegitimate, the culture and the way of life which he considers obnoxious, the education system which seems to him detrimental to his creed and culture will be so inexorably imposed on him, on his home and on his children that he will not be in a position to avoid.

Hence be it any individual or community believing in a certain ideology, their faith and conviction compels them to strive for the extirpation of the rule opposed to their ideology and bring their own ideology into power as they cannot live according to their own faith under the rule of an inimical ideology. Any slackness or indifference in this struggle shows nothing but insinceréty and hypocricy in one's faith and conviction.

"May Allah forgive you (O Muhammad) Why did you give them leave to stay behind you. Yourself should not have given them leave so that it should have become manifest to you which of them spoke the truth and you should have also known which of them were liars. Those who believe in Allah and the Last Day will never seek permission (for exemption)

from striving with their riches and their lives. And Allah knows well those who fear Him. Only those make such requests to you (to be exempted) who do not believe in Allah and the Last Day and whose hearts are full of doubts and in their doubts they waver." (9 : 43-45)

In these words, the Qur'an has given a clear and definite verdict that the acid test of the sincerety and devotion of a party to its convictions is that it strives with heart and soul or not to bring its ideology and faith in power. If you go on with the power and authority of an inimical ideology, it is quite a positive proof that you are false in your faith and it is sure to result in the fizzling out of your nominal devotion and faith in Islam. It will start with your enduring the inimical system with disdain. By and by you will adjust yourself with that system and your contempt will change into a liking for that system. Finally, a stage will come when you will serve as a supporter of that inimical system and help in its establishment and maintenance. You will then expend your resources and your life to keep that system in power instead of Islam. At this stage, there will remain no difference between you and the infidels except your hypocritical profession of belief in Islam, with just on abominable falsehood and a deceitful title of Muslim. The Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) has clearly disclosed this fact in a Tradition:

"I swear by Allah in Whose power is my life, you shall have to enforce good and curb evil and arrest the hand of the evil-doer and force him to do right or the inevitable consequences of the law of nature will be manifested in this

fashion that the curse of the evil-doers will infiltrate your hearts and you shall also become contemptible like them.

A World Revolution

This discourse amply elaborates that the objective of 'Jihad' in Islam is to liquidate the suzerainty of an un-Islamic system of life and replace it with the rule of Islam. This Islamic revolution is not confined to any particular state or states but meant for the world as a whole. To start with, no doubt, those who subscribe to this idea will strive to bring about this revolution in the country they live in, but their ultimate goal is no less than a world revolution. Any revolutionary ideology claiming the welfare of humanity would never confine itself to a particular people or country. The nature of such revolution demands world wide change.

The truth can never rest confined in geographical boundaries. Whatever is right and true is fine every where irrespective of all geographical boundaries and limits. No section of mankind can be deprived of the truth on the basis of race and colour or language and geographical boundaries. Wherever mankind is subjected to repression, discrimination and exploitation, it is the duty of the righteous to go to their rescue. The Holy Qur'an puts this idea as follows:

"Why should you then not fight in the way of Allah for the sake of those helpless men, women and children, who being weak have been oppressed; and are crying out, "Our Lord deliver us from this habitation which is ruled by tyrants." (4 : 75)

The social aspect of human relations is so universal in its nature that inspite of the division of mankind in nations and countries no State can fully implement her ideology without expanding it to her neighbouring States. Hence it is imperative for Muslim missionaries not to rest content with the establishment of Islamic system of life in a particular piece of land but to extend the suzerainty of Islam to all the neighbouring lands as far as its resources can carry it. It is indispensible not in the interest of its own security but also in the interest of humanity at large. The Muslim revolutionaries will have to launch a two-pronged campaign to achieve its goal. It should propagate its ideology all over the world and extend a general invitation to the people of all the countries to embrace the faith and ideology of Islam which truly gurantees their salvation and welfare.

On the other hand subject to resources and strength, they should subdue and liquidate all those anti Islamic powers who are usurping the genuine rights of their people and oppressing them by dint of force. This was the policy adopted by the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) and the succeeding illustrious Caliphs (may Allah be pleased with them). The country of Arabia where this Islamic revolution started was the first to be brought under the suzerainty of Islam. Later on, the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) sent invitations to other neighbouring States to accept and embrace the faith and ideology of Islam. Wherever the ruling class refused to accept the true

faith of Islam and to submit before Allah Almighty, the Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) resolved to take military action against them. The campaign of Tabuk was the first in the series of military actions. When Hadrat Abu Bakr (may Allah be pleased with him) assumed leadership of the Muslim revolutionaries after the departure of the holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) from this world, he took military action against the world powers of Rome and Iran, who were all out to crush the emerging revolution of Islam. Later, Hadrat 'Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) carried this military campaign to a victorious end. The people of Egypt, Syria, Rome and Iran initially mistook these military actions as the imperialist policy of the Arabs and believed that the Arabs too, like other imperialist powers, had set out to subjugate other nations. This misconception led them to fight against Muslims under the banners of Caesar and Chosroes. But when they came to know the revolutionary ideology of Islam and it dawned on them that Muslim armies were not fighting with imperialistic designs, or to establish the suzerainty of a nation over all other nations; they were in fact missionaries striving to rescue the common man from the tyranny and oppression of Caesars and the Chosroes, this disclosure turned the sympathies of the downtrodden people towards the forces of Islam. The people began to forsake their allegiance to Caesars and Chosroes and, wherever conscripted by force, they did not fight against the Muslims with their heart and soul. This resulted in the

astounding victories for the Muslims in the beginning. Further when the people of these newly won territories saw the Islamic system of equity and justice, fraternity and liberty in action, they willingly joined this international revolutionary party and set out to other countries to spread its message as the upholders of this sacred mission.

The Terms "Offensive" and "Defensive" are irrelevant

One can easily understand the fact from the explanation given above that the division of war as 'offensive' and 'defensive' is quite irrelevant to the concept of Jihad in Islam. These terms apply only to the wars between nations and nations and between countries and countries, for the terms 'attack' and 'defence' are used with reference to a country or a nation. But when an international party rises with a universal faith and ideology inviting the humanity at large to embrace its faith and ideology and accept into its fold all and sundry irrespective of race and colour, language and territory on equal footing and strives only to liquidate the powers of tyranny and oppression, injustice and inequality and replace them with the rule of its own ideology. Thus the terms 'offence' and 'defence' carry no justification in this case. Apart from it, the Islamic concept of Jihad has no relevance with the terms offensive and defensive. Jihad in Islam is both offensive and defensive at one and the same time. It is offensive because the followers of Islam assault the rule and authority of the opposing ideology while it is

defensive because the Muslim revolutionists are constrained to capture and retain power to implement their revolutionary ideology. As a revolutionary party, it belongs to no particular place to defend, it upholds certain principles which it must protect. Similarly when these revolutionaries mount any attack, they do not attack the land of their opponents, they launch attack on the principles and ideology of their opponents. They do not aim at coercing their opponents to relinquish their principles and ideology. Their aim is always to snatch power and authority from their opposing ideology.

The Status of Dhimmis

The preceding discussion also answers the question of status of the votaries of other faiths and ideologies after the establishment of an Islamic government. *Jihad* in Islam does not interfere with the faith, ideology, rituals and social customs of the people of other religions. It allows them perfect freedom of religious belief and permits them to live according to their faith and creed but it does not recognize their right to administer State affairs in a manner detrimental to the ideology of Islam, or to demand continuation of such practices that are against the interest and welfare of the people at large. For instance, as soon as Islam comes into power it will ban all forms of usury and interest in the economic set up, it will not allow gambling in any form, it will curb all forms of business and financial dealings forbidden in Islamic law, it will

close down all dens of prostitution and other immoral activities; it will make it obligatory even for non-Muslim women to observe modesty in dress as required by Islamic Law and forbid immoral display of sexual attractions. Films will be censored. The Islamic government in the interest of collective good of the public and to safeguard its moral and social structure may refuse to permit such cultural activities as may be permissible in non-Muslim society but may be damaging and fatal according to the social norms of Islam.

If someone charges Islam with intolerance, he should see that no creed in the world has shown as much tolerance to the votaries of other faiths as has been shown by Islam. In other cases the protagonists of opposing faith are repressed to such extent repressed that they are left with no option but to migrate to some other country. Islam on the contrary gives full opportunity to the people of other faiths with peace and tranquility to make progress and prosper and displays such magnanimity towards them as has no parallel in the history of world as yet.

The Charge of Imperialism

Here it must again be reiterated that Jihad in Islam means only that war which is fought in the cause of Allah. When an Islamic government comes into existence as a result of this struggle the Muslims are never allowed to assume despotic powers like the traditional Caesars and Chosroes. A Muslim never fights and is not supposed to fight as a

Muslim to establish personal rule and to subjugate the subjects of Allah as his own subjects and provide a paradise on earth for himself by expropriating the fruits of labour of the people. A war for personal ends can not be termed as Jihad in the cause of Allah. Such a war is a war for selfish ends and such a government has nothing to do with Islam.

Jihad in Islam is a selfless struggle devoid of all worldly interests. It is nothing but a sacrifice of life, money and carnal desires. If such *Jihad* is crowned with success and results in an Islamic government, the responsibilities of an honest and truly Muslim head of State are so onerous and burdensome that he is virtually denied all the luxuries and amenities of life. He gets no time to enjoy ease and pleasure of the life which is otherwise the main aim and desire of the aspirants for power in this material world. A ruler in Islam is neither over and above law, nor any superior being, distinct and privileged from the common man. He has no powers beyond the Islamic law. He cannot shield himself or any of his relatives and friends against the legitimate claim of even a man in the street. He cannot claim a single penny or even an inch of land without justification. He cannot draw even half a penny more from the public exchequer as his salary than the minimum requirements of a Muslim of average means. He cannot build for himself any luxurious and magnificent palace, nor can he live with pomp and glory, nor can he procure means of pleasure and enjoyment. He is always seized with the fear that one day he will be called to account for his every

deed and action of this worldly life and if he has received a single penny as illicit gain, or has snatched away a smallest piece of land by force, or displayed the slightest pride or haughtiness, or has committed any injustice or repression in a single instance, or even succumbed to his carnal desires and pleasures, he would be condemned to a very severe and dreadful punishment. Any body with an aspiration and desire to gain material amenties and luxuries of the world cannot be such a big fool as to offer himself for the thankless job of ruling under the Islamic law. In fact a petty shopkeeper is financially far better than the ruler of an Islamic State. He earns daily more than a true Caliph and enjoys a sound sleep at night. The Caliph in Islam can neither even earn as much as a petty shopkeeper nor can he enjoy a peaceful sleep during the night.

This is the basic difference between Islamic and un-Islamic system of government. The ruling junta in an un-Islamic State claims absolute authority and power and exploits all the means and resources of the land for exclusively personal interests. In striking contrast to it, the persons in power in an Islamic State serve without any personal aim and interest and secure no personal advantage for themselves more than what is readily available to a common man. Compare the scale of salaries granted to civil service cadres under the government of Islam with the salaries of civil servants today under modern imperialist governments or under the contemporary imperialist powers of the Islamic era,

you will find a vast difference in spirit and essence between the imperialist-dominated world and the world of Islam.

During the Islamic era the governors of Khurasan, Iraq, Syria and Egypt were paid salaries even less than the ordinary Inspectors of today. The first Caliph Hadrat Abu Bakr Siddique (may Allah be pleased with him) supervised and controlled such a vast empire on a salary equivalent to Rs. 100/- per mensem. Hadrat 'Umar's (may Allah pleased with him) emoluments did not exceed than the amount equivalent to Rs. 150/- per month, notwithstanding the fact that the coffers of the Islamic State were brimming with the wealth of the two empires of the known world, Rome and Iran. Apparently if the imperialists conquer lands so does Islam, yet there is a sky of difference between the two in spirit and essence.

> *The eagle and the vultures both fly in the same space, yet the pursuits of eagle are entirely different from that of the vulture.*

This is the real sense of 'Jihad', a term much debated and discussed these days. If one asks me where is that Islam, the Islamic Party and *Jihad* whose concept you have elaborated in such a detail and why we find no trace of them anywhere in the world today, my answer will be that do not confront me with this question, rather put this question to those who have deflected the attention of the Muslims from their real mission to superstitions and talismans, incantations and supererogatory

offerings as shortcuts to salvation and welfare, to solution of all problems, removal of all difficulties and achievement of all aims and objectives without any struggle and labour, and through the favour of some late divine. Put this question to those who have put aside the principles and fundamentals and aims and objects of Islam and engaged the minds of Muslims in the insignificant controversies confusing them to such an extent that they forget what Islam stands for and what is the purpose of their own creation. If they do not satisfy you, then put this question to the people in power and authority who claim to believe in the Quran and the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him), but are not ready to acknowledge any right of the Quranic injuctions and the guidance of the Holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him) any more than arranging functions of reciting the Quran off and on, or celebrating the birthday of the holy Prophet (peace of Allah be upon him), or pay lip service to the favours of Allah.

As for the enforcement of the Islamic law in day to day life those in power consider themselves utterly free from such responsibility. Truly speaking they are not really prepared to accept the restraints and to perform the duties imposed on them by Islam. They seek ways and means for salvation without any pains and efforts.